



USOPC College Sports Sustainability Think Tank

Vertical Partnerships Recommendation: Team USA Collegiate Recognition Program

July 1, 2021

BACKGROUND/CHARGE: The USOPC Think Tank vertical partnerships group’s long-term charge was to explore avenues to increase collaboration across media and commercial partners to leverage and promote the value of Olympic and Paralympic sports. One concept generated by the group was to expand the Team USA college recognition effort. Since 2008, the USOPC has partnered with the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (and some commercial partners) to present the U.S. Olympic Achievement Award to the top three schools contributing to Team USA’s Olympic medal count. The group generated many ideas to expand this recognition program and attract commercial partner engagement.

RECOMMENDATION: The vertical partnerships group believed an expanded Team USA college recognition program could increase public awareness annually, intrigue commercial investment in Team USA/college programs and encourage school competitiveness by celebrating Team USA ties to colleges - all while serving as a platform to promote Team USA athlete development through the college system on a quadrennial and annual basis. The following serves as a high-level overview of collegiate ideation around the recognition effort.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER ACTIVATION
SPORT AWARDS	[ANNUAL] Financially recognize school participation contributions to each national team by honoring winners nationally (e.g., via the annual NACDA convention or a NACDA/USOPC symposium) and/or at the campus level (e.g., via football games, rivalry games). Award would involve an annual media effort to celebrate college footprints on national teams and partnership ties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Award trophy with a tasteful sponsor reference - NACDA/NGB/School engagement event - School financial award to be used in sport-specific operational budget
SCHOOL AWARDS	[GAMES YEAR] Recognize the top three schools with ties to the Team USA medalists with a public-facing award in a college setting (e.g., honor at an NCAA Final Four event, honor through campus community event).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide trophy to top-three schools via on-campus presentation - NCAA event presentation
ATHLETE AWARDS	[ANNUAL] Create national team uniform patch to honor current student-athlete ties to Team USA ties. Annually recognize athletes with patch presentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send patches to ~250 athletes across ~130 schools - Campus recognition event - Team USA college footprint page sponsorship
LEGACY AWARDS	[GAMES YEAR] Issue schools an *iconic item and ceremonial best practices to recognize their Team USA athlete/medalist via prominent placement in their school facility. USOPP may facilitate licensing opportunities; Getty partnership may facilitate display for single-source use. *trophy, banner, flag, torch, plaque, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Award could include a tasteful sponsor reference, involving relevant schools - Team USA college legacy page/widget sponsorship

HORIZON: The USOPC collegiate partnerships team is working with LA28 to package a pitch proposal to a potential sponsor in the summer/fall of 2021, with an estimated launch date of summer 2022 to celebrate college contributions to the 2021 Tokyo and 2022 Beijing Games.